GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1810
ANSWERED ON:25.11.2016
Food Testing Laboratories
Chavan Shri Ashok Shankarrao;Gaikwad Dr. Sunil Baliram;Gupta Shri Sudheer;Kirtikar Shri Gajanan Chandrakant;Mahato Shri Bidyut Baran;Radhakrishnan Shri T.;S.R. Shri Vijay Kumar;Singh Shri Kunwar Haribansh

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the High Court of Mumbai has recently observed that there is an urgent need to upgrade the food testing laboratories of the country, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has announced a scheme to strengthen the infrastructure of food testing laboratories in the country recently, if so, the details thereof and the expenditure likely to be incurred for this purpose;

(c) whether the Government has constituted an empowered Committee for implementing the said scheme and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of the States/UTs which have sent proposals to the Union Government for strengthening their food testing infrastructure in their States/UTs?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
(SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE)
(a): The Hon'ble High Court of Bombay in Writ Petition 2535 of 2015 observed that the laboratories where the food samples were tested were either not accredited by NABL or not recognized by the food authority under section 43(1) of the Act or even if they were accredited or notified, they were not accredited to make analysis in respect of lead in the samples.

(b): A Central Sector Scheme for "Strengthening of Food Testing System in the Country Including Provision of Mobile Food Testing Labs", with an outlay of Rs.481.96 cr., has recently been approved by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Scheme has six major components viz., (i) strengthening of 45 State Food Testing labs (atleast one in each state with a provision of 2 labs in large states); (ii) strengthening of Referral Food Testing Labs; (iii) support for 62 Mobile Food labs (one mobile lab for every 20 district with a provision of atleast one mobile lab in each state); (iv) capacity building of food testing laboratories personnel; (v) incentivising States to utilise the testing facilities available in the Food safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) notified Labs; and (vi) School Food & Hygiene Programme.

(c): An Empowered Committee has been constituted on 6.10.2016 to guide and oversee the implementation of the said scheme. The composition of the Empowered Committee is as under:
I. Chairperson, FSSAI
II. Chief Executive Officer, FSSAI
III. Nominee Department of Health and FW
IV. Dr. S.K. Saxena, Director, Export Inspection Council of India
V. Representative of NABL
VI. Dr. Lalita Gowda, Chief Scientist (Retired), CFTRI, Mysore
VII. Representative of Ministry of Food Processing Industries
VIII. Head (QA), FSSAI

(d): The FSSAI has received proposals for strengthening of State food testing labs from 23 States/ UTs., Assam, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.